

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TANANA 00777 260637Z

14-L-11

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SCS-03 SCA-01 SS-15 CIAE-00 INR-07

NSAE-00 L-02 H-02 SY-05 /042 W

----- 057546

R 251420Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7206

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0777

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CASC (REPPAS, GEORGE S.)

SUBJECT: W/W REPPAS, GEORGE

REF: A. TANANARIVE 0763; B. TANANARIVE 0776.

1. GENERAL ANDRIAMAHAZO, IN STRONGLY DEPLORING THAT AMERICANS HAD LET HIM DOWN IN REPPAS' DISAPPEARANCE (REFTEL B), APPEARED BE MISINFORMED IN PART ABOUT EMBASSY ROLE. HE SAID REPPAS HAD GONE FIRST TO TULEAR (APPARENTLY PRIOR TO HIS LATER DISAPPEARANCE ON MARCH 28) WITH MALAGASY WOMAN IN DIPLOMATIC CAR SUPPLIED BY EMBASSY, AND THEN LATER WENT TO MAJUNGA. I IMMEDIATELY DENIED THAT REPPAS HAD BEEN GIVEN OFFICIAL EMBASSY CAR, BUT ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID THAT IN ANY CASE REPPAS WENT TO TULEAR IN A DIPLOMATIC CAR.

2. ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID THAT \$10,000 HAD BEEN CABLED TO REPPAS (APPARENTLY AT HIS REQUEST) THROUGH MALAGASY BANK. ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID THAT, WHEN GOMR LEARNED OF THIS, IT FROZE MONEY.

3. I GAVE ANDRIAMAHAZO VERBAL SUMMARY PERTAINING TO REPPAS FROM TIME HE LEFT PRISON ON FEB 12 UNTIL HIS DISAPPEARANCE ON MARCH 28. I STRESSED THAT AT ALL TIMES WE HAD COOPERATED CLOSELY WITH MALAGASY AUTHORITIES, INFORMING THEM AS SOON AS REPPAS HAD COME TO EMBASSY AFTER LEAVING PRISON IN MID-FEBRUARY AS WELL AS WITHIN MINUTES AFTER WE HAD DETERMINED ON MARCH 28 THAT HE HAD DISAPPEARED FROM EMBASSY. I NOTED THAT EMBASSY HAD NO POLICE POWER OVER REPPAS, AND HAD TO
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TANANA 00777 260637Z

DEPEND ON HIS HONOR DURING PERIOD HE WAS AT EMBASSY.

ANDRIAMAHAZO, IMPLYING THAT WE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN REPPAS WAS MAN WITHOUT HONOR, SAID THAT UNDER THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES WE SHOULD NOT HAVE ASKED THAT REPPAS BE ALLOWED TO REMAIN AT EMBASSY (WHICH WE OF COURSE DID BY DIPLOMATIC NOTE).

4. ANDRIAMAHAZO SAID THAT, CONTRARY TO WEALTH OF PUBLICITY OVER SPIRITING OF AGM PLANE OUT OF MADAGASCAR LAST NOVEMBER (FOR WHICH HE SAID HE IS ALSO HELD RESPONSIBLE BY MALAGSY), HE HAS BEEN ABLE THROUGH PRESENT CENSORSHIP KEEP PUBLICITY ON REPPAS DISAPPEARANCE TO MINIMUM. BUT HIS GREAT PROBLEM LIES IN MILITARY DIRECTORY.

5. IN VIEW THIS TALK WITH ANDRIAMAHAZO, PARTICULARLY MIS-INFORMATION WHICH SEEMS EXIST ABOUT EMBASSY ROLE, I HAVE NOW CONCLUDED THAT FIRST PART OF MOFA NOTE ON REPPAS (REFTEL A) SHOULD BE RESPONDED TO WITH FULL AND DETAILED ACCOUNT OF EMBASSY'S ACTIONS WITH RESPECT TO REPPAS WHILE HE WAS AT EMBASSY.

6. IF DEPT CONCLUDES THAT REPPAS CANNOT BE RETURNED TO MADAGASCAR, AS SPECIFICALLY REQUESTED BY ANDRIAMAHAZO, DEPT SHOULD FURNISH US WITH GUIDANCE ON RESPONSE TO SECOND PART OF MOFA NOTE (AS REQUESTED REFTTEL A).
MENDENHALL

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 25 APR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975TANANA00777
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750147-0140
From: TANANARIVE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750414/aaaaanrx.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 TANANARIVE 0763, 75 TANANARIVE 0776
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 27 AUG 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <27 AUG 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <12 DEC 2003 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: W/W REPPAS, GEORGE
TAGS: CASC, (REPPAS, GEORGE S)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006